DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 114 178 PS 008 134

AUTHOR Serafica, Felicisima C.; And Others
TITLE Social Orientation as Evidenced in Regulatory Appeal Strategies: A Cross-Cultural Study.
PUB DATE Apr 75
NOTE 22p.; A shorter version of this paper was presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (Denver, Colorado, April 10-13, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; *Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Differences; Interpersonal Relationship; *Linguistic Patterns; Mother Attitudes; *Mothers; *Preschool Children; Social Class; *Socialization; Sociocultural Patterns; Socioeconomic Influences
IDENTIFIERS *Philippines

ABSTRACT

The social orientation of 60 American and 60 Philippine mothers representing two levels of social class was assessed through the verbal regulatory appeal strategies which they employed in five hypothetical everyday situations involving their 4-year-old children. Social orientation was assessed through the mothers' responses to the Bearison and Cassel Questionnaire for Regulatory Appeal Strategies. Each of the mothers' regulatory phrases was classified as person-oriented (expressing the feelings, thoughts, needs, of a person affected by the child's behavior), or position-oriented (expressing a nonsituation-specific rule of behavior in terms of the position status, or role of the child). Society was found to have a significant effect on mother's use of person-oriented versus position-oriented statements, but its impact varied as a function of the mother's educational level. Situational variations also influenced the adoption of a person versus a position orientation. This effect of situational determinants was modified by the mothers' education. The results were interpreted within the framework of Bernstein's (1961) theory of social learning. (Author/BRT)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRE
SENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED114178

Social Orientation as Evidenced in Regulatory Appeal Strategies

A Cross-Cultural Study

Felicisima C. Serafica and Suzanna Rose

University of Pittsburgh

Jose de Guzman

Ateneo University

PS 008134

Social Orientation as Evidenced in Regulatory Appeal Strategies

A Cross-Cultural Study

Contemporary research on cognitive development is greatly concerned with specifying the variables, e.g., maternal communication style, which mediate the impact of the social environment on the developing thought processes of the young child. Certain studies in this area, notably those of Bearison and Cassel (1975) and Hess and Shipman (1965) have examined the differential impact on children's cognitive performance of two types of maternal linguistic code which reflect different social orientations. The aim of the present study was to determine whether groups which vary in terms of societal membership and social class exhibit systematic differences in social orientation, as evidenced in the verbal appeal strategies they employ when regulating the behavior of their children. Like the two studies cited above, this investigation evolved out of Bernstein's (1961) theorizing about the social origins of linguistic codes.

Bernstein uses the term linguistic code to refer to specific principles which govern the selections an individual makes from the totality of options represented by a given language. These principles of choice supposedly originally elicit, progressively strengthen, and finally stabilize the planning procedures an individual uses in the preparation of his speech and guides his orientation to the speech of others (Bernstein, 1967). Two types of linguistic code, elaborated versus restricted, are posited. An elaborated code is attuned to the distinctions between self and others, articulates such attributes as characteristics and intentions of the referents, and uses sentence organization to make meaning explicit. In contrast, a restricted code highlights the ascribed status aspects

of the social relation but involves little attention to taking the listener's perspective into account or to making the intent of the speaker explicit. According to Bernstein, each of these linguistic codes reflects a particular social orientation which is the outcome of a given system of social relations. In turn, the nature of the social system or social structure is determined by the society's goals. To summarize, the thesis of Bernstein's theory is that societal goals, mediated through social orientations, constitute the basis for differentiation of language into elaborated or restricted linguistic codes. At the same time, the use of a specific linguistic code influences the intellectual, affective, and social orientation of the speaker and ultimately serves to reinforce the social structure to which the individual belongs. Thus, a society maintains itself.

One way of characterizing societal goals is to examine the relative emphasis placed on individualism versus group identification. Members of a society are sensitized to a particular organization of words which reflect either oneness or separateness. Bernstein has argued that a society which puts a premium on individualism is apt to have a social structure wherein relations among members are organized on the basis of individual psychological properties (intentions, feelings, values, etc.). The social orientation of such a system is a person-orientation. On the other hand, a society which stresses group identification is more likely to have a social structure wherein relations among members are predicated on the socially ascribed status or position (age, sex, occupation, etc.) of the members. Individuals relate to one another mainly through the position they occupy. The social orientation in such a system is a position orientation. These two types of social orientation have differential implications for the child's development. Thus far, studies of British

(Bernstein, 1962) and American (Hess & Shipman, 1965) populations consistently indicate that within a specified social structure, the type of social orientation is associated with social class operationally defined in terms of educational level and occupation. The hypothesized role of societal goal has yet to be validated. The present study explores the complex interrelationship between societal goal, social class, and social orientation by comparing the social orientation, as evidenced in regulatory appeal strategies of mothers representing two societies and two levels of education and occupation. The last two variables, subject's education and her husband's occupation, will henceforth be designated by the summary concept "social class." The use of this term does not in any way imply an assumption that the two social class groups constitute discrete categories. It is used merely as a convenient stylistic device to summarize the educational level of the subject and the occupational status of her husband, both of which are continuous variables. It should also be noted at this point that the investigators are aware of the difficulties in achieving strict comparability of social class in a cross-cultural study. In order to maximize comparability, at least of the two middle class groups, an effort was made to draw Philippine subjects who had obtained their education in the two countries, lived in cosmopolitan communities and interacted both socially and professionally with Americans living or visiting in the Philippines.

Lynch (1964) an American sociologist who has resided in the Philippines for many years has observed that there is differential emphasis on individualism and group solidarity in Philippine and American societies. He has pointed out that the American adult achieves security through independence whereas the Philippine adult achieves it

through interdependence. The sociological perspective advanced by Lynch has some support from a psychological study of Philippine values by Bulatao (1964). This investigation revealed that members of Philippine society attach the highest value to emotional closeness and security in a group, especially the family. Furthermore, it is expected that the good of the individual will be sacrificed for the good of the family or the group. In Philippine society, it is the shared versus the personal experience which is stressed. Social relationships are based upon a common, extensive set of closely-shared identifications and expectations held by its members. In addition, Philippine society has a strong orientation to ascribed status. Guthrie (1961) has noted that each society has a status hierarchy and related patterns of showing deference and superiority. In the Philippines, according to Guthrie, there appears to be a more conscious effort in this direction. If this characterization holds, Filipino mothers irrespective of social class will assume a position-orientation as compared to American mothers. More specifically, middle-class Filipino mothers in contrast to their American counterparts will give a significantly greater number of position-oriented responses; lower-class Filipino mothers may give more position-oriented responses than American mothers of similar socioeconomic status but the difference may not reach a statistically significant level.

Data concerning social orientation were collected in the context of a broad investigation of maternal linguistic codes in Philippine and American societies. Only the results pertaining to social orientation as evidenced in regulatory appeal strategies employed by mothers will be reported.

Methodology

The subjects consisted of 60 Filipino and 60 American Caucasian mothers classified into four groups according to societal membership and socioeconomic status. All middle-class mothers completed college and their husbands hold professional, executive, or managerial positions. In contrast, high school was the highest educational level attained by the lower-class mothers whose husbands hold semi-skilled or unskilled jobs. All subjects resided in urban areas. Each had a boy or a girl whose age at the time of data collection was within 4-0 to 4 years, 11 mohths. All children attended a day care group or nursery school and all had access to a T.V. set.

Social orientation was assessed through the mothers' responses to the Barrison and Cassel Questionnaire for Regulatory Appeal Strategies. This questionnaire, administered individually in an interview setting, elicited what the mother would say to her child in trying to regulate the child's behavior in five situations typifying everyday life occurrences. The questions are as follows:

1. Suppose it was time for _____ to go to bed, but he/she started to cry because he/she wanted to watch something on T.V. What would you say to _____?
2. What would you say to _____ if he/she brought you a bunch of flowers but you found out that he/she had gotten them from a neighbor's garden?
3. Suppose your husband forgot to bring _____ a present that he'd promised and he/she wouldn't talk to his/her father all day. What would you say to _____?

4. Imagine that _____ one day says that he/she doesn't want to go to school but he's/she's not sick or anything but just doesn't want to go. What would you say to _____ to get him/her to go to school?

5. Imagine _____ had been out shopping with you and when you got home you found that he/she had picked up some little thing off one of the counters without you noticing. What would you say to _____.

Responses were recorded verbatim. Each subject-predicate phrase in a mother's transcript that indicated an attempt to regulate her child's behavior was designated as a single regulatory statement and classified as person - or position-oriented, then assigned further to a subcategory within that orientation. A regulatory statement was classified as person oriented if it expressed the feelings, thoughts, needs, and/or intentions of the regulator, the child, and/or a third person who is affected by the child's behavior in a given situation. If the regulatory statement expressed a nonsituation-specific rule governing the behavior in terms of the position, status, or role of the child, it was categorized as position-oriented. The percent of agreement between the two individuals who did the ratings ranged from 82% for Situation 1 to 98% for Situation 2. The inter-rater reliabilities for the other situations fell somewhere between these two scores.

A three-factor mixed design analysis of variance was performed on the percentage of person-oriented responses given by the subjects to Situations 1, 2, 4, and 5. Situation 3 was omitted because it yielded few regulatory statements and low discrimination. Society and social class comprised the between factors while situation constituted the sole

within factor. Whenever there was a significant interaction, an analysis of variance for simple effects was carried out. Tukey's HSD test was applied in a post-hoc comparison of means. Unless otherwise specified, all mean differences reported are significant at the .05 level or higher.

Results

It was predicted in this study that society and social class would interact in their effects on mothers' use of person-oriented statements when regulating the behaviors of their children. Specifically, it was hypothesized that American middle-class mothers would use significantly more person-oriented statements in contrast to American lower-class mothers. It was also expected that such social class differences would be less marked in a society which emphasizes the group over the individual; hence, the percentage of person-oriented statements used by Philippine middle-class mothers would not differ significantly from those of Philippine lower-class mothers. Finally, if the above were found to be true, the Philippine middle-class mothers would give a significantly lower percentage of person-oriented statements as compared to their American counterparts but such a marked discrepancy would not be found between the lower class mothers from the two societies.

The ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of society ($F = 6.14$, $df = 1, 116$, $p < .025$) which was qualified by a significant interaction between society and social class ($F = 3.996$, $df = 1, 116$, $p < .05$). There was a tendency for American middle versus lower class mothers to

---

Insert Table 1 about here

---

give a higher mean percentage of person-oriented statements but the difference failed to reach an acceptable level of statistical significance.

Contrary to expectations, the mean percentage of person-oriented statements used by Philippine middle-class mothers was lower than that elicited from lower-class mothers in the same society. Of the four groups studied, the Philippine lower-class mothers produced the highest mean percentage of person-oriented statements (See Table 1), significantly more so than their American counterparts. In contrast, the Philippine and American middle-class mothers did not differ significantly in their use of person-oriented statements when regulating the behaviors of their four-year-old children.

Situation was also found to have a significant main effect ($F = 42.83$, $df = 3, 238$, $p < .001$) on the adoption of a person versus a position orientation. This situation effect is qualified by a significant situation x society interaction ($F = 2.97$, $df = 3, 348$, $p < .05$). Philippine, as compared to American, mothers gave more person-oriented responses in 3 out of the four situations, significantly so in Situations

Insert Table 2 about here

2 and 4. Situation 4 which assessed a mother's response to a child's not wanting to go to school elicited maximal use of person-oriented statements, significantly so in contrast to all other situations. Situation 3 which tapped a mother's handling of her child's picking up something while out shopping with her and taking the article home inconspicuously evoked the lowest mean percentage of person-oriented statements. These findings applied to mothers in both societies, irrespective of social class. In addition, for the American mothers only, Situation 1 elicited a significantly greater percentage of person-oriented appeals than Situation 5. American mothers confronted by a child's reluctance to go to bed were more apt to appeal to the child's feelings, interests,

and concerns in an attempt to alter the child's behavior but they were much more peremptory in dealing with a child's taking something from a store without paying for it. While Philippine mothers gave more person-oriented responses in Situation 1 versus Situation 5, the differenc did not reach an acceptable level of statistical significance. Instead, it was the difference between responses to Situation 2 versus Situation 5 which was significant for this group. They were definitely more person-oriented when dealing with taking flowers from a neighbor's garden versus taking something from a store.

Finally, an inspection of the relative potency of each situation in eliciting person-oriented statements reveals the interesting bit of information that for American mothers from both SES groups and Philippine middle-class mothers, Situation 4 elicited the highest percentage of person-oriented statements, followed by Situations 1, 2, and 5. A different pattern characterized the responses of lower class mothers in the Philippine setting (see Figure 1).

Insert Figure 1 about here

Discussion

The results obtained from the present study indicate that the use of person- versus position-oriented regulatory appeal strategies varies as a function of society. Philippine mothers as a group tend to use more person-oriented statements than American mothers but only the difference between the groups who had no more than a high school educati was statistically significant. Philippine lower class mothers in comparison to their American counterparts are more likely to adopt a person orientation when attempting to regulate the behavior of their children.

This finding is initially surprising but it appears tenable when one considers the data reported by Abasolo-Domingo (1961) concerning child-rearing practices in a Philippine barrio. In the community she studied, obedience towards parents was considered important yet the mothers were quite liberal about noncompliance from their children. She also found that the mothers were highly sensitive to the children's needs, feelings, states, and thoughts. The children were observed to be likewise sensitive to the needs of those around them and to have great concern for adults and children alike. Abasolo-Domingo concluded that mother's treatment of them become the children's models in their interactions with others.

The present study also indicates that situational variations influence the adoption of a person versus a position orientation. Furthermore, the effect of situational determinants is modified by social structure. This finding suggests that the prevailing value system may determine the type of social orientation manifested in a particular situation. Thus, the relative potency of each situation in eliciting person-oriented statements is consistent across educational and occupational levels within the American sample. Moreover, an identical hierarchical ordering of situational potency was shown by Philippine middle class mothers, who in contrast to lower class mothers, have received more exposure to American influences. The data suggest that one outcome of such exposure might be an increasing correspondence in value systems, at least insofar as child rearing is concerned.

The major concern of the present study was to validate the hypothesized role of societal goals as determinants of social orientation. More specifically, it was hypothesized that middle class mothers in a society which emphasizes group identification would use significantly

fewer person-oriented statements than their counterparts in a society which stresses individualism. The present study failed to yield empirical support for the hypothesized relationships between individualism and person orientation and its converse, between group identification and position orientation. Philippine mothers as a group did not produce a lower percentage of person-oriented statements in comparison with American mothers. Perhaps, Philippine society is less group-oriented than has been posited by American (Lynch, 1964) as well as Philippine sociologists (Hollensteiner, 1964) and psychologists (Bulatao, 1954). On the other hand, it may be that some of the assumptions underlying the present study warrant some serious re-examination since the results denote that the relation between societal goal and social orientation is not as simple nor direct as posited by Bernstein. It now appears that members of a society which stresses group identification are more likely to use person-oriented statements than those who belong to a society where individualism is emphasized. This finding suggests that societal goal does influence social orientation. For the particular population studied, however, the societal goal of group identification operates in a direction opposite to that predicted by Bernstein. The maintenance of group identification may involve well-defined role relations which could lead easily to the adoption of a position orientation On the other hand, at least within the small group such as the extended family, sustaining group cohesion also necessitates smooth interpersonal relations which are best attained through a person orientation. Lynch (1964) states that smoothness of interpersonal relations is highly and traditionally valued in Philippine society and found at work in all social encounters. He attributes the relatively greater importance

attached to harmony of interaction in the Philippines versus the United States to the differential emphasis on individual responsibility and group solidarity in the two societies. Fostering smooth interpersonal relations requires a sensitivity to one another's needs, intentions, feelings and values. The use of person-oriented statements reflects the Philippine mother's heightened sensitivity to others. By adopting a person orientation when responding to her child, the Philippine mother models a mode of relating which is adaptive for the child member of a group-oriented society.

Consistent with the findings reported earlier by Bernstein (1962) and Hess and Shipman (1965) concerning Americans and Britishers, respectively, the present study yielded trends towards social class differences. Although these trends did not reach a .05 level of significance, perhaps due to the small sample size, they do suggest that social orientation might be associated to some degree with a woman's educational attainment and/or the occupation of her husband. It is important to note, however, that the direction of social class differences in social orientation vary as a function of social structure. In at least 2 Western societies, a person orientation is associated with middle class membership whereas a position orientation tends to be related to lower class affiliation. The opposite holds in Philippine society, indicating that while education might influence social orientation, societal goal has an over-riding impact.

Finally, our findings also suggest that the nature of the situation influences the mother's mode of relating to her child, i.e., whether she acts in a manner designed to differentiate the individual's

psychological properties or to emphasize attributes linked to socially ascribed status. This differential responsiveness to situations is most likely associated with the meaning of the particular situation within the mother's value system. This value system may be determined by societal goals other than that dealing with group identification or individualism. In conclusion, the present study indicates that societal goal can influence the type of social orientation but that there may be a number of intervening variables which mediate its impact. The nature of these variables and their respective roles will have to be specified and empirically validated in future studies.

References

Abasolo-Domingo, M.F.E. Child-rearing practices in Barrio Cruz na Ligas. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of the Philippines, 1961.

Bearison, D.J., & Cassel, F.Z. Cognitive decentration and social codes: communication effectiveness in young children from differing family contexts. Developmental Psychology, 1975, 11, 29-36.

Bernstein, B. Social class and linguistic development: a theory of social learning. In A.H. Halsey, J. Floud, & A. Anderson (Eds.), Economy, Education and Society. New York: Free Press, 1961.

Bernstein, B. Social Class, linguistic codes and grammatical elements. Language and Speech, 1962, 5, 221-240.

Bernstein, B. Elaborated and restricted codes: an outline. International Journal of American Linguistics, 1967, 33, 126-133.

Bulatao, J. The Manileno's mainsprings. In F. Lynch (Ed.), Four Readings on Philippine Values. Quezon City: Ateneo Press, 1964, pp. 50-86.

Guthrie, G.M. The Filipino Child and Philippine Society. Manila: Philippine Normal College Press, 1961.

Hess, R.D., & Shipman, V.C. Early experience and the socialization of cognitive modes in children. Child Development, 1965, 34, 869-886.

Hollensteiner, M.R. Reciprocity in lowland Philippines. In F. Lynch (Ed.), Four Readings on Philippine Values. Quezon City: Ateneo Press, 1964. Pp. 22-49.

Lynch, F. Social Acceptance. In F. Lynch (Ed.), Four Readings on Philippine Values. Quezon City: Ateneo Press, 1964. Pp. 1-21.

Table 1

Mean Percentage of Person-Oriented Regulatory Appeal Strategies as a Function of Society and Social Class

	Society	
Social Class	American	Philippine
Lower	36.81	51.43*
Middle	43.44	44.44

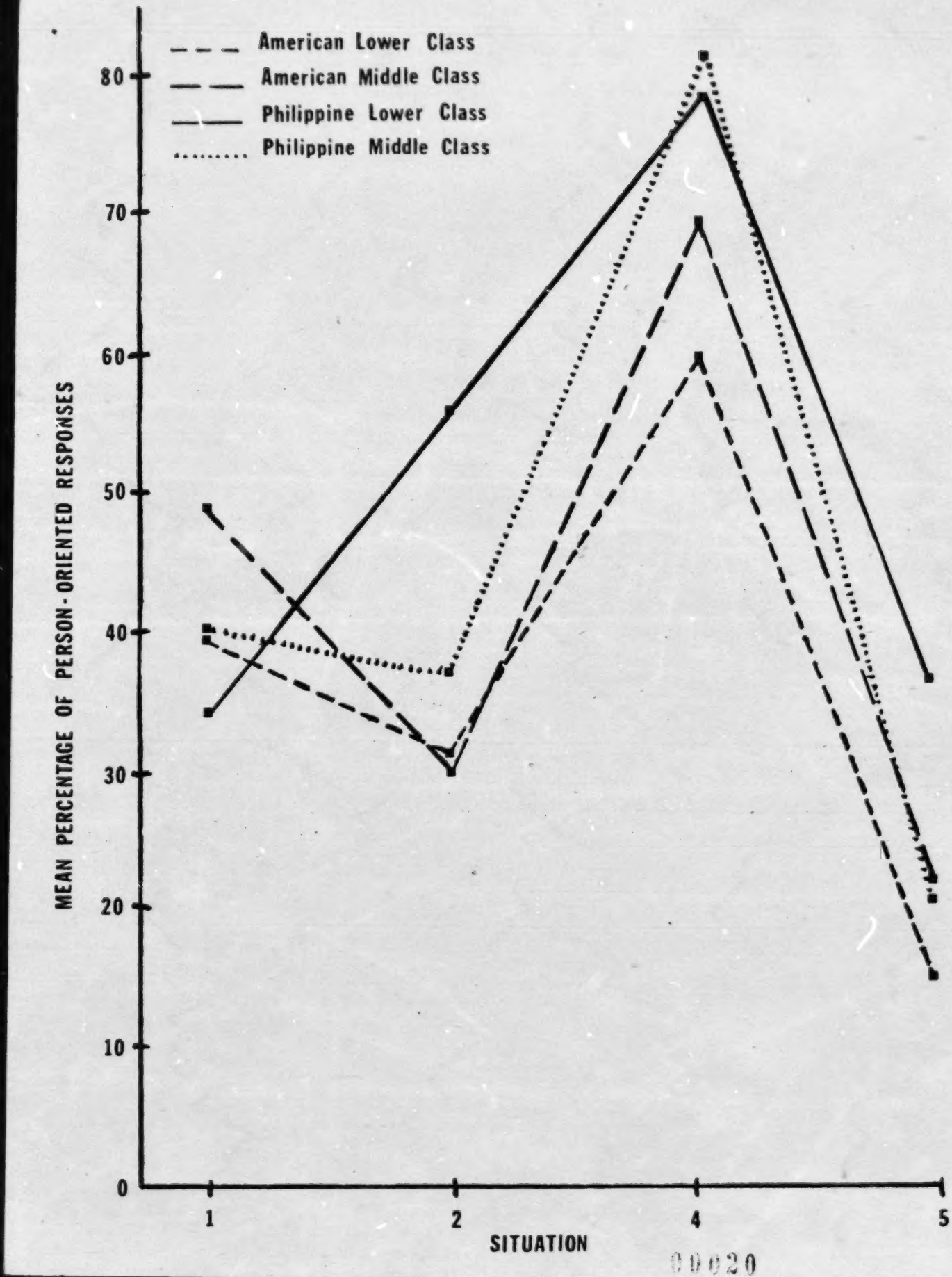
*$p < .05$

Table 2

Mean Percentage of Person-Oriented Regulatory Appeal Strategies as a Function of Society and Situation

Society	Situation 1 (a)	2 (b)	4 (c)	5 (d)
American	44.28*d	30.75	67.36*abd	18.11
Philippine	36.94	46.44*d	79.33*abd	29.03

*$p < .05$ that the mean is different from the means designated in letters.


American Lower Class
American Middle Class
Philippine Lower Class
Philippine Middle Class
MEAN PERCENTAGE OF PERSON-ORIENTED RESPONSES
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1
2
4
5
SITUATION

00020

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Mean percentage of person-oriented responses as a function of society, social class and situation.

Footnote

Support for this study was provided by a John Bowman Faculty Travel Grant from the Nationality Rooms Committee of the University of Pittsburgh. The authors wish to thank the administrators of all the schools, social agencies, as well as parishes in the United States and in the Philippines who assisted in the recruitment of subjects for this study. Appreciation is also expressed for the laboratory space and other facilities provided by the Philippine Department of Welfare. Thanks are due to Ann Carberry and Diane Marsh for their help in analyzing the data. A shorter version of this paper was presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development held in Denver, Colorado on April 10-13, 1975. Attendance at the SRCD meeting was made possible by UCIS grant No. ASP-75-594-H-HM awarded by the Asian Studies Council of the University of Pittsburgh. Author Serafica's address: Department of Psychology, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Penna. 15260.